

Reply to questions from the National Security Council:

On record from NSC Spokesperson Caitlin Hayden: The exposure of hundreds of thousands of classified U.S. government documents by the WikiLeaks internet site demonstrated to the government and the public that the sharing and safeguarding procedures for classified information in place at the time were inadequate and put our nation's security at risk.

To reduce the risk of another WikiLeaks-like disclosure, in October 2011, the President issued Executive Order 13587 to improve the security of classified computer networks and classified material.

As part of the EO, the President directed federal departments and agencies with classified networks to establish insider threat detection and prevention programs. He also established the National Insider Threat Task Force under joint leadership of the Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence to assist agencies in developing and implementing their insider threat programs.

In developing standards for these programs, the task force specifically sought to ensure they not erode civil liberties, civil rights, or privacy protections for government employees.

In November 2012, following an extensive interagency coordination and vetting process, the President issued the National Insider Threat Policy and the Minimum Standards for Executive Branch Insider Threat Programs via a Presidential Memorandum. For more details, I direct you to DNI, where the task force is housed.

Questions from McClatchy:

In Oct. 2011, POTUS convened by executive order an Insider Threat Task Force co-chaired by the AG and the DNI.

1. The task force was charged with developing "a government-wide policy for the deterrence, detection and mitigation of insider threats." As far as we can tell, the administration has never released the task force's final policy. Could we please get a copy?

2. The task force was also charged with "developing minimum standards and guidance for implementation of the insider threat program's government-wide policy" and issue those standards and guidance by October 2012. A WH announcement dated Nov. 21, 2012, announced that they'd been issued. Could we please get a copy?

3. The DoD Insider Threat Strategy says that leaks of classified information are tantamount to espionage and aiding the enemy. Does POTUS share this view? How does this view accommodate releases like the Pentagon Papers, classified documents that showed how successive administrations had misled the nation about the conduct of the war in Indochina?

4. Some agencies' insider threat programs extend beyond unauthorized leaks of classified information to unauthorized leaks of unclassified information. Does POTUS agree that they should cover unauthorized releases of unclassified information?

5. The ITP partly relies on federal employees monitoring high-risk behaviors of co-workers in order to recognize those who could be security risks. It also exhorts employees to report their suspicions and subjects those who don't to punitive measures. Does POTUS support this approach?